

Message Text

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63

ACTION ARA-17

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 EB-11 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02 INR-10

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-12

COME-00 INT-08 OMB-01 TRSE-00 SCEM-02 AID-20 SAJ-01

RSR-01 /128 W

----- 105163

R 182152 Z MAY 73

FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7492

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E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: EMIN, PGOV, PFOR, PN, CH

SUBJECT: COMMERCE MINISTER' S CHINA VISIT

REFS: (A) PANAMA 2495 (B) PANAMA 2609

1. SURPRISINGLY, VISIT OF PANAMA' S COMMERCE MINISTER FERNANDO MANFREDO TO MAINLAND CHINA HAS RECEIVED VERY LITTLE LOCAL COVERAGE SO FAR. LA ESTRELLA, STAR G HERALD, AND TELEVISION NEWS HAVE CARRIED BRIEF ITEMS REPORTING HIS MEETING WITH CHOU EN LAI AND HIS DEPARTURE MAY 17, BUT GOVT . MEDIA HAS BLANKED OUT STORY. PRESS PROBLEM MAY SIMPLY BE LACK OF SUFFICIENT INFORMATION.

2. THERE ARE POSSIBLE POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS. EMBASSY HAS REPORTS THAT MANFREDO SUBMITTED RESIGNATION TO GENERAL TORRIJOS DURING LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL MEETING TWO DAYS PRIOR TO HIS DEPARTURE OVER COUNCIL' S REJECTION OF TEXACO EXPLORATION CONCESSION (REF. B). ACCORDING TO SOURCE MANFREDO SUBSEQUENTLY AGREED RETAIN POSITION SO HE WOULD BE RECEIVED BY ASIAN HOSTS AS PANAMANIAN OFFICIAL

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BUT PLANS TO LEAVE OFFICE ON RETURN. MANFREDO HAS BEEN
FRUSTRATED WITH JOB FOR SOME MONTHS, MOST RECENTLY OVER
GOVT' S IMPLEMENTATION OF NEW LABOR CODE AND BUDGET
RESTRICTIONS ON HIS MINISTRY. DANGER IS THAT COMMERCE
MINISTRY WILL BE LEFT WITHOUT STRONG DIRECTION AS
HEALTH MINISTRY CONTINUES TO BE WITH STATUS OF
MINISTER ESQUIVEL STILL UNRESOLVED.
SAYRE

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NMAFVVZCZ

*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

Message Attributes

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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
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Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Executive Order: n/a
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Film Number: n/a
From: PANAMA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
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Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
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